Message Text

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TAGS: PFOR, PK, GW, CA

USMISSION IAEA VIENNA

SUBJ: PAKISTANI PRIME MINISTER'S VISIT TO OTTAWA

SUMMARY: MAJOR AREA OF DISCUSSION DURING PRIME MINISTER ALI BHITTO'S VISIT TO CANADA FEBRUARY 23 TO 26 WAS NUCLEAR SAFEGUARDS AND FRENCH REPROCESSING PLANT. APPARENTLY GOC MADE NO PROGRESS ON REPROCESSING FACILITY AND LESS THAN SATISFACTORY PROGRESS ON SAFEGUARDS. END SUMMARY

1. DISCUSSIONS ON PAKISTANI NEED FOR FRENCH/REPROCESSING FACILITY WERE HEATED BUT INCONCLUSIVE. PM ADVISER IVAN HEAD TOLD POLCOUNS THAT GOC HAD ARGUED THAT PAKISTAN DID NOT NOW AND WOULD NOT FOR FORESEEABLE FUTURE PRODUCE SUFFICIENT SPENT FUEL ITSELF TO JUSTIFY REPROCESSING FACILITY AND INQUIRED TO WHAT USE PAKISTAN WOULD PUT REPROCESSED FUEL. PAKISTANIS AVOIDED DIRECT RESPONSE, RETIRING BEHIND STATEMENT THAT CANADIAN ATTITUDE CONFIDENTIAL

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PREJUDICIAL TO PAKISTANI TECHNOLOGICAL DEVELOPMENT

AND IMPLIED MISTRUST OF PAKISTANI MOTIVES.

2. ON SAFEGUARDS, PAKISTANIS OBJECTED TO CANADIAN ATTEMPT TO MAKE SAFEGUARDS APPLICABLE RETROACTIVELY. EXTAFF OFFICIALS REPORT THAT SOME PROGRESS WAS MADE IN GOC EFFORTS TO TIGHTEN EXISTING SAFEGUARD PROVISIONS ON PAKISTANI NUCLEAR POWER STATION, BUT ONE EXTAFF OFFICIAL REMARKED "WE'RE STILL A LONG WAY FROM WHERE WE WANT TO BE." HOWEVER, GOC OFFICIALS NOT PREPARED TO SAY THAT THE POSSIBILITY FOR EVENTUAL AGREEMENT IS NOT PRESENT.

3. IN RESPONDING TO QUESTIONS IN THE HOUSE OF COMMONS DURING THE BHUTTO VISIT, PRIME MINISTER TRUDEAU TOOK HIGH LINE THAT "CANADA'S SAFEGUARDS HAVE BEEN MOVED BY US TO A HIGHER DEGREE OF SAFETY THAN THOSE OF ANY OTHER NUCLEAR SUPPLIER." REFERRING TO PAKISTANI ARGUMENT ABOUT RETROACTIVE EFFECT OF PRESENT CANADIAN SAFEGUARDS POLICY, TRUDEAU ACKNOWLEDGED THAT "THE ARGUMENT HAS (NOT) BEEN SOLVED CONCLUSIVELY TO THE SATISFACTION OF EITHER PARTY," BUT HE EXPRESSED HIS CONFIDENCE THAT AN AGREEMENT WOULD BE REACHED. HE ALSO ACKNOWLEDGED THAT GOC HAD NOT OBTAINED UNDERTAKING FROM PAKISTAN THAT PAKISTAN WOULD NOT PROCEED WITH REPROCESSING PLANT, REITERATED THAT CANADA IS "VERY CONCERNED" ABOUT THAT POSSIBILITY, AND SAID THAT DISCUSSIONS ARE CONTINUING. IN GENERAL CONTEXT OF CANADIAN EFFORTS ON NUCLEAR MATTERS, TRUDEAU ADDED NOTE OF CAUTION THAT IF CANADA WERE TOO DOGMATIC, EVEN THOSE SAFEGUARDS NOW IN OPERATION MIGHT BE JEOPARDIZED BY DRIVING COUNTRIES CANADA IS NEGOTIATING WITH TO OTHER LESS DEMAND-ING SUPPLIERS.

4. WHILE NUCLEAR MATTERS CLEARLY DOMINATED TALKS, BOTH GOVERNMENTS FOUND TIME TO SIGN TWO MINOR AGREEMENTS ON DOUBLE TAXATION AND INVESTMENT INSURANCE, AND GOC ISSUED A "DECLARATION OF INTENT" TO PROVIDE \$50 MILLION IN AID FOR CONSTRUCTION OF TRANSMISSION LINE IN PAKISTAN. PRESS RELEASES AND FINAL COMMUNIQUE TO BE POUCHED TO DEPT. AND ISLAMABAD.

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